DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 479 563 IR 022 169

AUTHOR	Leleu-Merviel, Sylvie; Vieville, Nicolas; Labour, Michel
TITLE	Professional Skills Training for Social and Behavioral Competence: A Corporate Case Study in Using a Fictional Video Script for Interactive "Learning by Viewing."
PUB DATE	2002-10-00
NOTE	7p.; In: E-Learn 2002 World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, & Higher Education. Proceedings (7th, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, October 15-19, 2002); see IR 022 093. Figure contains illegible type.
AVAILABLE FROM	Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE), P.O. Box 3728, Norfolk, VA 23514. Tel: 757-623-7588; e-mail: info@aace.org; Web site: http://www.aace.org/DL/.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS	*Corporate Education; Foreign Countries; *Instructional Design; *Instructional Materials; Material Development; *Professional Development; *Professional Training; Training
IDENTIFIERS	*DVD Technology; France; *Interactive Videodisks

ABSTRACT

Faced with a rapidly changing society, the need to develop versatile instructional materials to update the professional skills of experienced practitioners has become a major necessity. This paper outlines the framework of how the project called "Je peux vous aider? (Can I help you?)" was developed. It concerns the training of all the sales teams of a major chain store in France. A premium was put on helping professionals in the field to be more aware of their verbal and non-verbal behaviors. To do this, a series of hybrid pedagogic techniques was used, which included traditional lectures, role plays, a self study video, a DVD video and e-learning. This involved making the content matter as attractive and varied as possible so that learners can acquire knowledge easily in their own way. It is in using a type of instructional design like the "Scenistic Approach" that one can ensure the appropriateness of both the pedagogic scenario and its content. (Author)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

Professional Skills Training for Social and Behavioral Competence: A Corporate Case Study in using a Fictional Video Script for interactive "learning by viewing"

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

G.H. Marks

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Sylvie Leleu-Merviel, Nicolas Viéville and Michel Labour
Laboratoire des Sciences de la Communication
Université de Valenciennes et du Hainaut Cambrésis, France
sylvie.merviel@univ-valenciennes.fr

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 479 563

Abstract: Faced with a fast changing society, the need to develop versatile instructional materials to update the professional skills of experienced practitioners has become a major necessity. It is in this context that we will outline the framework of how the project called *Je peux vous aider ? (Can I help you ?)* was developed. It concerns the training of all the sales teams of a major chain store in France. A premium was put on helping professionals in the field to be more aware of their verbal and non-verbal behaviors. To do this, a series of hybrid pedagogic techniques was used, which included traditional lectures, role-plays, a self-study video, a DVD-video and e-learning. This involved making the content matter as attractive and varied as possible so that learners can acquire knowledge easily in their own way. It is in using a type of instructional design like the *Scenistic Approach* that one can ensure the appropriateness of both the pedagogic scenario and its content.

Introduction

Encouraging adults to improve their knowledge in areas in which they feel they are already competent can be a particularly challenging task. This is especially true in the field of professional training[1] with experienced practitioners who are considered to be experts of their domain and so tend to see training sessions as a calling into question of their acquired skills (cf. Theory of cognitive dissonance, Festinger 1957), when in fact both research and technological changes induce a natural evolution of their craft. In this sense, this target population is more demanding, less docile, and less receptive to training sessions than, for example, their more inexperienced colleagues.

Given this, one of the challenges of lifelong education is to create instructional materials that facilitate an on-going learning process. Consequently, human resources managers invest a lot of money in staff training with often disappointing results in the quality of the final outcome. This is generally due to an inadequate evaluation of specifications. And while Information Technology (IT) can often play an important role as a solution to this type of training, but not in every case, work in the domain (*e.g.* Leleu-Merviel 1996) shows that "scripting a lesson" is an important strategy in improving the effectiveness of the teaching/learning process.

In this context, we first describe, in Section 2, the framework for analyzing the training needs and its practical implications. This is followed, in Section 3, by an explanation of the chosen aims of the instructional requirements. This involves a discussion of the pedagogic implications of having chosen different approaches to meet the designated requirements. The fourth section details how the five-step *Scenistic Approach* has been used with its *diagesis*, *narrative canvas*, *scenation*, *scenic* and *setting up the situation*, phases in terms of the overall structure of the *Je peux vous aider ?* (*Can I help you?*) training DVD-video, and its role vis-à-vis other teaching tools, like those of IT. Finally, in Section 5, we consider the different "patterns" of practical implementations, and their technical limits, aimed at improving their real effectiveness in satisfying client expectations concerning the required characteristics of the educational product.

[1] Definition: "Training" in this context implies a "planned process to modify attitude, knowledge, or skill behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Its purpose, in the work situation, is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation" (Manpower Services Commission, UK, 1981) Lesson 11, *B.A (Hons.) Business Studies*. Bolton Institute, UK cf. http://www.bolton.ac.uk/campus/business/babus/humanresource/restricted/hrm_lesson11/hrm_lesson11.html (Retrieved 9.12.2001. The Welsh concept of *hyfforddi* (to train) offers the complementary notion of "making the way flexible" for the learner, as opposed to *addysgu* (to educate, to instruct) based on the Latin notion of *scala*, (ladder, "a climbing device").

IR022169

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Analysis of corporate needs

In needing to make access to the content matter attractive and varied, one invariably has to comply to a quality-based approach, given that:

Definition : Quality designates the capacity of an entity to satisfy the needs and wants of users (Merviel 1977).

In this particular context, the analysis of the instructional needs can be summarized by three basic questions:

(1) Who are the immediate stakeholders[2]?
(2) What are their expressed needs and wants?
(3) What are the desired outcomes?

The answers to these questions provide a basis for establishing the parameters of the instructional context and the ensuing "pedagogic scenario".

Who were the immediate stakeholders? The principal direct stakeholder was a regional Human Resources Director in charge of training all the sales teams of one of France's major chain stores in the region of *Nord/Pas de Calais*. At the time, he was in a process of giving each and every sales assistant face-to-face training, which was to be followed up by regular refresher courses with the aid of technological supports in order to maintain employees' newly acquired skills. As this was an expensive scheme, he wanted to get value for money from the investment long after the official face-to-face training sessions had been completed. Other major stakeholders were: the managers of each of the different chain stores, of this northern region of France on the border of Belgium; the company's employees, namely the sales assistants as the end-users of the instructional material.

What were the stakeholders' expressed needs and wants? The issue to be addressed was the upgrading of sales assistants' professional skills by regular and varied in-house training sessions after having received face-to-face courses. There was also the challenge of making the training content available to (new) sales assistants that had not attended the face-to-face training sessions. This meant that new instructional material had to be versatile so that it could be used both in a traditional, guided instructional situation, as well as for personal self-study. Furthermore, the technology to be used had to be that which already existed in the work place *i.e.* VHS videotapes, paper-based documents and email. Interactive multimedia resources, like the DVD-ROM, were excluded because it meant buying new equipment (e.g. multimedia computers) that would have exceeded the training budget.

What were the desired outcomes? The essential objective was to show sales assistants how to adapt their verbal and non-verbal behavior to the needs of customers. This was to be done by helping the employees to better understand company policy, in dealing with customers, for whom the ideal sales assistant is someone who is: well groomed, welcoming, polite, open, reactive, available, smiling, courteous, respectful, in a good mood, punctual, responsible, organised, competent, a good listener, silent, curious, dynamic, convincing, honest, lucid, patient, reassuring, motivated and autonomous. In this context, the instructional material had to help learners become more efficient in their sales techniques by focusing on practical problems encountered at the stores.

The instructional objectives

Given that the main pedagogic objective was to modify behavior patterns (procedural knowledge), this meant a more theoretical (declarative knowledge) approach to customer service was to be limited. It therefore seemed appropriate to adopt a pedagogic approach that built on the existing knowledge of sales assistants in such a manner that they could be led to construct, in their own way, what professional behavior needed to be avoided and which were to be encouraged. In this context, it was decided to use an approach of demonstrating key concepts through examples. This implied carefully staging a fictional series of typical professional situations to which learners could easily relate to based on a variety of e-learning and more traditional learning supports.

Our approach is underpinned by the ground breaking work of Treicher (1967) who reminds us in his book, *Are you Missing the Boat in Training Aids? Audio-Visual Communications*, that most people "learn" (retain) 10% of

[2] Definition: A *stakeholder* represents groups of people or individuals that can have an influence, in this case, on the training needs. Researchers R. Oudman, A.M. Vos, and J. Biesboer review various methods of "Stakeholder Analysis" at http://panoramix.univ-paris1.fr/CRINFO/dmrg/MEE98/misop001/ (retrieved 27.10.2001).

what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they both see and hear, 70% of what they discuss with people whose opinions they value, 80% of what they personally experience, and 90% of what they teach other people. A training program should therefore go beyond providing teaching aids that learners can both "see and hear". The pedagogic scenario of instructional materials needs also to focus on the human interactional elements of learning to include meaningful "discussions" and "teaching" other people (e.g. peer learning), so to transform input into personal learning experiences. In this light, an interactive learning solution based on a video/film format offers some specific advantages, as highlights the film historian Turner.

> ... (with) the abandonment of the idea that there was a core of meaning in a film which the audience had to discover. Meanings are seen as the products of an audience's reading rather than as an essential property of the film text itself. Audiences make films mean: they don't merely recognize the meanings already secreted in them (Turner 1988:121).

A training scenario should then, for example, get learners to discuss how they saw a scene and how this relates to their personal experience and its future implications for them. It is in such domains that network-based technology like the Internet (with its discussion forums, chats, emails, etc.) can facilitate learning by communicating with different people. That said IT, like Internet, is not in itself pedagogic. What makes these tools so, is the appropriateness both of what is put in them (content) and how this is done (method), hence the need for operational frameworks such as the *Scenistic Approach*, and other related ones, aimed at making optimal use of the content.

Using the *Scenistic Approach* to draw up the pedagogic script

Our human resources director was particularly concerned in capitalizing on his investment. So his first request was to ask the audio-visual specialist at the University of Valenciennes to simply film series of traditional talk and chalk, face-to-face training courses.

It would not have been strategic to reject out of hand this first request of the paying client. So we did what we were asked to do. We gave to the company 40 hours of video tapes... that, as it turned out, have never been used, as we had anticipated right from the start. From a pedagogic point of view, the tapes were not, educationally speaking, quality material, because they do not match the needs and wants of the users, *i.e.* the sales assistants (and not those of the human resources director). After this first failure, it was not very difficult to convince our client to try something else, namely a specially written video fiction as pedagogic input to facilitate learner self-critical reflection. This was done based on the principle of the *Scenistic Approach* (Leleu-Merviel 1996) in providing a framework for scripting a series of "events" in a way that it ensures overall coherence and transparency in the design process. The technique has five major steps: (1) diagesis, (2) narrative canvas (3) scenation, (4) scenic, and (5) setting up of the situation.

Why, then, is this type of solution better suited to the needs and wants of users?

Diagesis. The diagesis involves everything that belongs to the imagined/proposed setting of the document as expressed through the (lesson) content. In this case, the universe of the film is exactly the same as the reality of the sales assistants. The story physically takes place in a real store. The employees can therefore identify themselves with the situation. Even if it is simulated by actors, it is a real situation of daily professional life of learners.

The diagesis also includes taking stock of, for example, the different educational paradigms and approaches that could be used to achieve the objectives identified in the analysis of the instructional context. In this case, it was decided that learners would be systematically encouraged to first identify professionaly inappropriate behavior or elements in the scenes presented to them, followed by suggesting a possible solution to remedy the situation. It was hoped that by using such a "constructivist" inspired approach (cf. Jonassen *et al.* 1999) new knowledge would graft itself onto existing knowledge structures.

Narrative canvas. The second step of the scenistic approach is selecting appropriate events that will constitute the narrative canvas. At first sight, the events included in the film seem crudely exagerated. And seeing it for the first time, the sales assistants laugh at the behaviour of their video-clones, because they come across as being so unprofessional. In fact, the corporation has a customer relations quality-reference book where an exhaustive list of *Quality Points* (QP) is given for each type of behavior for sales assistant when dealing with a customer. To be a "perfect" sales assistant, it would be theoritically sufficient to know all the QP by heart and to comply to them. To ensure the company's policy is applied, some "mystery-clients", that is undercover quality-inspectors, regularly go to the store to write up reports about the quality of its customer-relations by enacting a purchase-need situation with a sales assistant, unbeknown to that person. Based on some of these reports, every situation integrated into the narrative canvas of *Je peux vous aider ? (Can I help you ?)* was in fact experienced by a mystery-client.

For instance, when the transaction is not immediatly concluded, the sales assistant has to promote the client's fidelity to the company in writing down the item's references and the client-advisor's name on a special company client "Contact Card". So, for example, what can be seen in Scene 15 of the film, *Je peux vous aider ? (Can I help you ?)*, is not a figment of an author's fertile imagination. Scene 15 depicts a real situation where a sales assistant, called Michel, did in fact write down an item's references and his name, not on the Contact Card, but on the nearest bit of paper on hand, in this case the corner of a page from a stock taking list. The information noted down was then rapidly torn off and given to the "customer". The piece of paper was duly put into the quality-controler's report ,of which a copy can be seen in Figure 1 below.

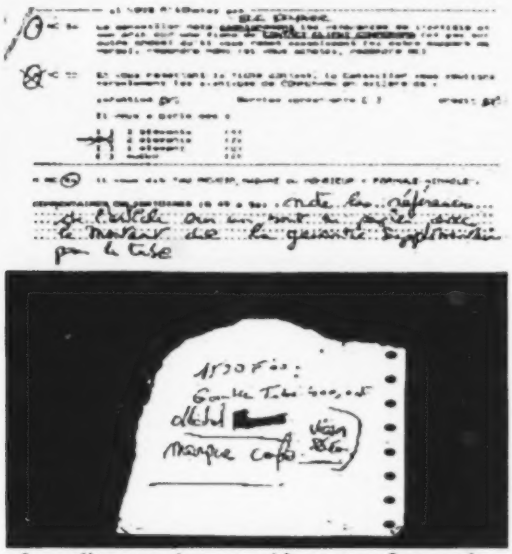

Figure 1: A partial copy of a quality control report, with a scrap of paper given by a sales assistant to a "customer" indicating the name of the client advisor (Michel) and details of an item on sale

The same process was used for other inappropriate behaviour that were then included in the film. In short, everything portrayed in the film happened at least once to the undercover quality control inspectors.

Scenic: The scenic transposes the narrative canvas into concrete, hands on reality. It is at this stage that one makes aesthetic and logistic choices within the limits of the practical and financial constraints, conditions of usage, etc. This includes the choice of appropriate props for the written scenes.

In this case, the shooting of the film was done in a real store of the company. The employees can recognize the familiarity of the surrondings, and can therefore identify themselves with the situation. After shooting and editing, the film is finished, it can now finally be used.

Viewing is not learning : different patterns of pedagogic use

Little can be really learnt by simply viewing the film, because viewing is not learning. This may seem self-evident, but it is all too often forgotten. Pedagogically speaking, it is essential to define a procedure in how to use the material to ensure, in this case, that sales assitants hone their skills to: make clients feel they are the centre of attention; take stock of the clients hopes and dreams; propose the appropriate products; master particular sales techniques; and activily participate in a dialogue with the client.

The first anticipated use of the video was that of a guided learning game. The head of each sales assistant coaches his/her team, and focuses on a theme for each training session. After observing the scene on the VHS-video as many times as necessary, learners are asked to identify recommended behavior ("Positive points") from dysfunctional behaviors ("Negative Points", "Problems related to manners or behavior"). Finally, some "points of reflection and development" are suggested for further discussion. In this way sales assistants have to discover all the good and bad points of a chosen scene. The coach has the teacher's booklet, which identifies the positive points, negative points,

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

problems concerning manners or behavior, and open questions to raise further issues and develop critical self-reflection. For example, the coach's check-list concerning the first scene (Theme: Answering the telephone) can be seen in Figure 2. Of course, learners (players) must never see the check-list. They only know the number of points they need to discover to win. Some QP are easy, but others are very difficult to find *e.g.* a prohibited-open jacket with the company shirt.

Scene 1: Prologue and answering the telephone
Length: 1 minute 30
Start mark: 1mn20. Stop mark 2mn53
Staff concerned: all

☺ **Positive points**

QP1	The person picks up the telephone before the 4th ring (less than 4 rings).
QP3	The person is not chewing gum.
QP6	The waiting time is less than 30 seconds.

⊗ **Negative points**

QP2	The person does not mention the company's name.
QP2	The person does not mention the name of the store where s/he works.
QP2,7	The person does not say "Good morning".
QP2,7	The person does not present him/herself with his/her first name.
QP7	The person does not indicate in which department s/he works.
QP3	The person replies in a muffled voice without articulating.
QP4	The person does not reply to the client's question.
QP4	The person does not connect the person to the correct department.
QP8	The person replies in a disagreeable way, making it clear to the client that s/he is tedious.
QP5,9	The person does not say "Goodbye Madam" at the end of conversation.
QP5,9	The person does not add a friendly word, nor a polite one at the end of the conversation.

Problems related to manners or behavior
- The person interrupts the client while s/he is speaking.
- The person asks the client to call back later.
- The person hangs up on the client.

☞ **To go further, points of reflection and development**
(1) The person justifies him/herself by mentioning the problems in the store: "I am alone". How could the person have avoided this situation?
(2) The person gives a negative image: "I don't know". What should the person have said?
(3) One should never ask a client to call back. What should one do?

Figure 2: The coach's check-list of the first scene

In reality, the training material has never been used in this way. This is mainly due to the fact that the "linear reading" paths of the videotape is not appropriate for such educational use. For example, one cannot easily find the exact spot of a scene on a video recorder in order to play the "game" well. The issue of "reading paths" is a matter of the "scenation" (for example a traditional film has a linear scenation) *i.e.* the third phase of the *Scenistic Approach*. The solution to this technical limit of the traditional linear film is to change the scenation, and to convert the linear format into a more flexible support. In this case, the DVD, which allows the film to be to be split up into fragments so that users can access different part of the film directly, and read them in any sequence they wish, and as much as they need to. The DVD-Video was chosen, because the workstation is a standard television-set, a DVD-player and its interface is an ordinary remote-control. Though the DVD-video does not have the flexibility of a key-board, mouse, or computer, its format offers a high quality of images and sounds.

"Setting up the situation", or the fifth and final phase of *Scenistic Approach*, defines the practical ways that the user can in fact access the (video) fragments of the document *via* user-functions. Taking into account the potentially laborious linear and sequential navigation of a remote control box, as compared to a free flow approach of a computer "mouse", special icons were created to help learners go through the DVD-video document efficiently. In

this way, the relatively few interactive possibilities of the DVD-video format could be put to profitable use. Given that, the ergonomics of the interface must suggest navigational functions *via* identifying symbols, the colors of the company were chosen as the guiding color scheme to present the interactive pages of the DVD-video. Blue, pink, yellow, green and orange hues were added to identify the five different themes in order to facilitate user-navigation and to make the document more attractive. In this context, 17 icons were designed to be meaningful to the user.

In order to get maximum use of the specially written scenes, a 25-page booklet was also printed for learners to help them use the material. A separate booklet was done for trainers. These booklets were linked to more general guidelines concerning the different skill-based learning tasks that could be done on-line and off-line with the DVD-video. This included ways of making learning less tedious and more motivating, *via* active learning tasks such as role plays, competitive and collaborative activities, for example to win a prize for getting the maximun QP in a minimum of time in using the electronic network and face-to-face situations. In short, the DVD-video is only one aspect of a pluri-media learning package that includes e-learning.

Short of using more elaborate networks like the "Video On Demand" system, the still evolving state of the Internet limits the present use of high quality audio-visual materials, which demand a certain level of fluidity and picture quality. This latter point is particularly important when inciting learners to observe non-verbal behavior and language, *e.g.* a badly knotted tie, where the quality of the images could be a determining factor.

Conclusion

Clearly e-learning is here to stay for better or for worse. From a technical point of view Civanlar (2001 p.433) is optimistic about video delivery on the Internet. He banks on the greater availability of higher access bandwidth, server load and network traffic reduction, and an increase in backbone bandwidth. Indeed, technology like the Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language (SMIL) facilitates video delivery by reducing multimedia content to speed up the time it travels on the Internet. Based on eXtensible Markup Language, SMIL separates multimedia content into different files and streams (audio, video, text, and images), transmits them to individual computers, and then have them displayed together as if they were one multimedia stream (cf. McCannel, 2000, *Multimedia for the Masses*). It is in this direction that our research is being taken to make audio-visual documents a greater part of e-learning, beyond the current, largely written text-based, approach to e-learning. That said, decades of experience in distance learning has unequivocally shown that "the lack of personal contact between the learner and the student is the biggest weakness" of this type of education and training (Noffsinger 1926). In effect, the challenge of e-learning is not only to transmit content, but also to ensure that learners appropriate it from a cognitive point of view, for "viewing is not learning". In short, it is only when the technical possibilities of electronic networks match that of the pedagogic demands of e-learning, that we can truly envisage the possibility of a Global Village that is not only technically efficient but also of high educational quality.

References

- Civanlar M.R. (2001), "Internet video", pp. 433-464, in Sun M-T & Reidman A.M., 2001, *Compressed Video and Netwotks*, Mercel Dekker Incorporated.
- Festinger L. (1957), *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, Stanford University, Stanford California.
- Jonassen D.H., Peck K. L., Wilson B.G. (1999), *Learning with Technology: A Constructivist Perspective*, Merril/McGraw-Hill, New Jersey.
- Leleu-Merviel S. (1996), *La Scénistique : méthodologie pour la conception de documents en media multiples suivant une approche qualité*, Unpublished post-doctorate thesis, Université de Paris VIII, France.
- Leleu-Merviel S. (1997), *La Conception en communication. Méthodologie Qualité*, Editions Hermès, Paris.
- McCannell S. (2000), SMIL: Multimedia for the Masses, *Hotwired*, by 06 Oct, http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/00/41/index4a.html (retrieved June 8, 2002)
- Noffsinger J. (1926), *Correspondence Schools*, MacMillan, New York.
- Treicher D.G. (1967), *Are you Missing the Boat in Training Aids? Audio-Visual Communications*, United Business Publications, New York.
- Turner G. (1988), *Film as a Social Practice*, Routledge, London.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

[X] This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

[ ] This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").